

## HOMES

### Interior Design Show in Toronto: Meet six influencers



KAREN HAWTHORNE | January 13, 2012 1:09 PM ET



#### Interior Design Show 2012 in Toronto: Meet six influencers

*Karen Hawthorne meets some of the buzz-makers at the Interior Design Show, coming Jan. 26-29; Part 1 of 3*

##### **Karim Rashid**

Banal things interest Karim Rashid. Humans come into contact with 600 objects a day, the designer says, pointing to mass commodities as the frontier where manufacturers and industrial designers can deliver a human connection. “Design is about thinking about the sound, the light, the smell, the sensual; more than just the pragmatic function.” At the Interior Design Show (IDS, [interiordesignshow.com](http://interiordesignshow.com)), he’ll talk about how design should reflect the moment, and how it shapes the future.

The prolific designer has created more than 2,500 objects, including radiators for Tubor that serve as functional art and the Oh Chair, pictured, for Umbra. He’s currently making wedding rings for space tourists, and “over-the-top” cosmetic surgery suites in Seoul. Next up for the man who wrote *I Want to Change the World*: “Ecological things, but beautiful. When we talk about sustainability, we go back to some old style — a chair made out of old tires. No one’s going to put a chair from rubber tires in their living room. But you’ve got to make a chair that’s about now and happens to be biodegradable.” [karimrashid.com](http://karimrashid.com)



## **Piero Lissoni**

Design dates back to prehistoric times, says IDS international guest of honour, Piero Lissoni. In a culture saturated by trends, he puts it into perspective: “Design started millions of years ago, when a man took a stone to bring it inside his cave,” he says. “The objects modify the spaces where we live or, better, act as intermediaries between us and the space we live.” A great chair, such as his Kartell Pop Armchair, invites us to relax and take pause, while his sleek Birillo Toilet Brush for Alessi might help us better enjoy the task.

As an acclaimed architect and designer, his own created objects, known for their impeccable detail and minimalism, span top product labels — Boffi, Cappellini, Cassina Kartell — and interiors for hotels, Milan villas, showrooms and the private Ghost yacht. What project awaits? “Any project is possible, as long as it is a good project, built with good people, good clients or good craftsmen.” For IDS, he’s designing a 1,200-square-foot Lissoni Lounge on the showroom floor — much more than a cave with rocks, we suspect.

[lissoniassociati.com](http://lissoniassociati.com)



## **John Edelman**

John Edelman will find a receptive audience at IDS. The branding expert is championing the industry: Support design, support the real thing. “I’m truly against the knock-off concept. Every time you buy, say, an Eames chair replica, you kill future design, you’re not funding the next experiment.”

He wants to de-mystify the modern label: “You don’t need to be living in a glass house to live with modern furniture. They’re classics and you can mix things in. Modern is different than contemporary — it’s forever, contemporary is more temporary.”

Mr. Edelman took the reigns at retailer Design Within Reach two years ago, leading collaborations with designers and cherry-picking products. He fell in love with the BassamFellows Tractor Stool, top, based on the ergonomics of a Swiss tractor seat. He brought the stool to DWR and it’s become one of the bestsellers.

He says, people want quality, but can they afford it? Herman Miller’s Time Life Chair sells for about US\$4,000. “It’s one of my favourite chairs. We brought 17 chairs into the studio and we sold 27 in two weeks.” [dwr.com](http://dwr.com)



Handout

## William Yeoward

IDS marks William Yeoward's first visit to Canada. The British design icon was recently appointed supplier of crystal glass to the Prince of Wales. He's curious to see if our living spaces will suit his art glass, pictured, and area rugs. "What I know of Canadian interiors is they're quite contemporary, very much into materials, surfaces, finishes, light," he says.

At IDS, Mr. Yeoward will share lessons learned over a 25-year career: "I don't see why good design has to be an excuse for people to be tortured. You need to be able to put that person in a chair so that they're comfortable to watch their television."

He designs for "real people," not only royals, in a challenging economy. When a full refurbishment isn't feasible, beautiful accessories can transform a room. His new Manton fabric collection for Designers Guild reflects a "happy, organic view" of the English countryside with colours inspired by the massive basket of vegetables he kept refreshing in his studio. "The look is more a farmhouse or cottage rather than a mansion or a castle." [williamyeoward.com](http://williamyeoward.com)



## **Aaron Hoey**

Anthropologie, the vintage-inspired retailer, is more akin to a treasure hunt than simply shopping the racks for something to catch your eye, says Aaron Hoey, global merchandising manager for the Philadelphia-based chain. “We’re distinctly aware of trying to connect with you emotionally and all of your senses,” says Mr. Hoey, who joined the retailer in 2007. “You might be looking at a sweater and right next to it might be a teacup, and that’s out of the ordinary.” A staff artist in each store creates surprising elements, such as a giant whale made from recycled shipping materials and papier-mâché for a London location.

Mr. Hoey has an Indiana Jones role in the operation, travelling the globe for wares. Last spring, in Namibia in the Skeleton Coast of Africa, he came across tribal craftspeople and began collaboration for textile work. At IDS, he’ll discuss how to make design relevant in the marketplace. “We have to show the customer something she hasn’t seen before. Things become repetitive, trends last for shorter periods of time. How do you battle that?” [anthropologie.com](http://anthropologie.com)



## Michael Bruno

“In the words of Oscar Wilde: ‘Work is more fun than fun’ ” — that’s what Michael Bruno would like to convey at IDS.

Mr. Bruno went from real estate broker in San Francisco to dot-com entrepreneur in Paris to launch [1stdibs.com](http://1stdibs.com), where, if you offer full price, you get “first dibs” on beautiful things: Seven-foot revolving bookcase by Claudio Salocchi for Sormani, anyone? Mr.

Bruno’s aim was to connect designers with dealers. More than 10 years in, the site is considered the leading online marketplace for antiques and mid-century modern furniture. This year, he plans to target European markets, and he’s added a real estate search: “I can look at houses online for hours.” He says the Internet has been a profound inspiration.

“The most important thing the Internet has brought the design industry is time. One of my favourite designers, Windsor Smith, says that we have manufactured time for her. The second most important thing the Internet brings to the business is choice. Designers can do better projects if they have more choices.” [1stdibs.com](http://1stdibs.com)